

## ■ Another Tax Filing Season or, Many Happy “Returns”

### HIGHLIGHTS

In this issue you will find:

■ Catching Up After a Delayed Start

■ Live Help is Password Protected

■ Help in Taxing Times

■ Many Ways for Taxpayers to Obtain Tax Products and more!

After the holidays, as we begin the New Year and as our thoughts turn to Spring, we find the tax filing season is upon us. As we gear up for tax time once again, we want to thank you all for your support in ensuring that the citizens of your community have access to federal tax materials as they prepare their tax returns. We appreciate the hard work of those who volunteer through the Bank, Post Office and Library Program (BPOL) to help IRS reach taxpayers

across the country each year. Strictly a voluntary program, the network of more than 42,000 BPOL locations has proven to be a reliable source for obtaining tax materials for millions of taxpayers. During the 1997 filing season nearly 19 million taxpayers filed returns containing one or more forms supplied through the BPOL Program. We thank you and, by looking at the numbers, your patrons thank you too. Many Happy “Returns!”

## ■ Catching Up After a Delayed Start

Each filing season IRS produces and ships millions of copies of tax related materials to 42,000 BPOL locations, 3 IRS distribution centers, 300,000 tax professionals, hundreds of VITA locations, thousands of employers and businesses, millions of taxpayers and more. This year the production of some of these materials got off to a later than usual start. Pending legislation affecting certain personal tax credits for

taxpayers resulted in production delays of several tax products. The legislation has been enacted and we are well underway producing the tax materials but, as a result of the delays, delivery to our stakeholders of a number of federal tax products will be later than scheduled. Where possible, we have expedited production of these products in an effort to deliver your materials as soon as possible.

### HOW TO REACH US

Have BPOL related questions? We are here to help. Please contact us.

**Live Internet On-line Help at:** [www.irs.gov/forms\\_pubs/bpol/livehelp.html](http://www.irs.gov/forms_pubs/bpol/livehelp.html) 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Saturday

**BPOL Hotline:** 1-800-829-2765 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Saturday

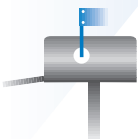
**Write to us at:** Internal Revenue Service

BPOL Program

P.O. Box 8906

Bloomington, IL 61702-9881

[www.irs.gov/forms\\_pubs/bpol](http://www.irs.gov/forms_pubs/bpol) is your link to BPOL Program support. Several services are available at this Web site. Tax product shipping information is routinely updated, program information is provided and frequently asked questions are posted here. You can also subscribe to the *BPOL Dispatch*, an electronic subscription message service, where program updates and product status are automatically sent to subscribers. Get answers to your questions right away through *Live Help*. Our assistants are on-line to answer your questions.



# ■ Live Help is Password Protected

WWW.IRS.GOV/FORMS\_PUBS/BPOL/LIVEHELP.HTML

Starting on January 24, 2000, you will notice a change to Live Help, our interactive real time on-line application providing BPOL Program support. When you log on to Live Help, a screen will appear asking for log in information. A generic log in and password is assigned for all BPOL associates.

## Type in the dialog box:

**Log in:** BPOL

**Password:** Program

**Click:** OK

This will take you to the Live Help screen.

If you experience problems, call the BPOL Hotline 1-800-829-2765 for assistance.

# ■ New and Improved Products

## PUBLICATION 3201

**NEW**

*IRS Tax Information* is a bookmark listing IRS Taxpayer assistance telephone numbers. It is issued in tear-off pads of 50. If customers ask you for tax help or information, just tear off a bookmark to refer them to IRS for assistance.

## PUBLICATION 2053

**NEW**

*Quick and Easy Access to IRS Tax Help and Forms* identifies various options available to taxpayers for getting tax forms and assistance.

## PUBLICATION 3194

**NEW**

*Laminated Tax Forms* - This publication contains 13 of the most popular tax forms all laminated and fastened to a steel ring for easy and clear reproduction on a copy machine.

## PUBLICATION 3207

**NEW**

*Small Business Resource Guide: What You Need to Know About Taxes and Other Topics*, features information organized by the stages of the business life

cycle, including developing a business plan and financing business start-up; starting the business; and expanding the business. The CD-ROM also contains all the IRS business forms and publications, information on how to electronically file and pay taxes, and links to important Web sites.

## PUBLICATION 1796

*IRS Federal Tax Products CD-ROM* contains approximately 2700 federal tax forms, instructions and publications. CD-ROM contents include: current year tax products (1999) and related tax products; prior years tax products (back to 1992); Taxpayer Information Publications; IRS Fax Forms Catalog; World Wide Web Links; and IRS e-file information. A new revision is published each year and issued in two releases. Release one contains all tax products that have been approved and is issued in mid-December. Release two contains the same products as release one plus the remaining products that have been approved. Release two is issued early February. The CD-ROM is an excellent resource for archiving tax materials.

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## BPOL VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

IRS is looking for college and high school students who will volunteer at BPOL locations during tax filing season. Can you help? Here's how:

- Display volunteer recruitment material, Publication 1274, *Volunteer in Your Community Poster* and Publication 1275, *Volunteer Enhancement Brochure*.
- Place your orders for these products by calling 1-800-829-3676.
- Would any of your patrons like to volunteer at your location? If so, please give them a copy of Publication 1275, *Volunteer Enhancement Brochure*.

## ■ Help in Taxing Times

Do you need someone at your location to help patrons prepare their tax returns? Does your location sponsor a Tax Day Celebration event on April 15? We can help. IRS has several Taxpayer Assistance and Volunteer Programs:

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, Tax Counseling for the Elderly, Understanding Taxes (for educators), Bank, Post Office and Library Program, Practitioner Education Program and Community Outreach, IRS

Small Business Workshops, and Small Business Tax Education (STEP) Programs.

To find out more about these programs, call the BPOL Hotline at 1-800-829-2765 and ask for the telephone number of the Taxpayer Education Coordinator nearest you. Or, visit us at the *The Digital Daily* Web site: [www.irs.gov/prod/hot/atn/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/prod/hot/atn/index.html) and click on your state to find contact and other information.

## ■ From Years Past



IRS has tax forms dating back to 1864. Forms that are not for the current tax year are considered Prior Year tax forms. We have undertaken a project to digitize all 69,000 pages of the original tax documents. By creating an electronic file of these products, we are now able to store the images on a digital

print server and print the documents on-demand. If your patrons need Prior Year tax forms, they can contact IRS at 1-800-829-3676 to order. Remember, the Tax Products CD-ROM and the IRS Web site, *The Digital Daily*, also have prior year tax forms dating from 1992.

## ■ Many Ways for Taxpayers to Obtain Tax Products

Often taxpayers will request products you may not stock or obscure tax forms that aren't as readily available as Form 1040. Tax materials are available through many channels. The fastest way for taxpayers to get the tax products they need is to visit the IRS Web site, *The Digital Daily*.

- [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)
- Federal tax products are posted within 48 hours of approval
- Download and print forms and publications
- Research publications on-line
- Place an order for tax materials for delivery by mail

Other options for obtaining tax products:

- Order forms and publications from IRS: 1-800-829-3676

- Photocopy from Publication 1132, *Reproducible Federal Tax Forms*
- Tax Fax Service (150 tax forms and instructions)
  - dial 703-368-9694 from the handset of a fax machine
  - follow voice prompts
  - products will be faxed back right away

Be sure to order Publication 3201, *IRS Tax Information Resources*. Publication 3201 is a bookmark that can be issued to patrons when they ask for tax information or assistance. It will direct them to the various IRS resources listed above to obtain the information or products they need.

# Questions We Have Received from BPOL Associates

We have had a wide variety of questions from you about the BPOL Program and related topics. Here are just a few.

**Q.** *What are the small codes that are found on the front of some federal tax forms.*

**A.** Several of you have asked about the codes found on federal tax forms. Each year IRS labels various tax forms with different source codes that identify the distribution program supplying the form. The data is used to estimate how many taxpayers obtain forms through different distribution channels. We can only estimate a minimum number of people using the various distribution channels because we only track forms that are filed. We have no means of estimating the number of taxpayers who pick up forms that they do not file with their return or those who pick up only instruction booklets or publications. The source code information helps us assess the effectiveness of our distribution programs.

Overall, 52 tax products contain source codes. Seven of the 1040 series of forms available through the BPOL program are coded. 1999 source codes are listed below.

**Q.** *When can we put our tax products out for taxpayers to pick up?*

**A.** Years ago we asked that tax products not be displayed until after January 1. Now, because local circumstances and needs vary and tax materials are available through so many channels, each location decides the best time to display their materials.

**Q.** *My supply of tax materials is running low and the filing season isn't over yet. Can I get more tax forms, instructions and publications?*

**A.** Yes, you can fax an order (309-662-2432) or call the BPOL Hotline (1-800-829-2765) to place an order and we will send you the additional materials you request. If you are not sure what or how much to order, we will be glad to help you determine what products and quantities you may need. You can also order through Live Help, our online live assistance. See "How to Reach Us" for more information.

## SOURCE CODES FOR THE 1999 TAX FILING SEASON:

<b>C</b>	Publication 1132L	<b>S</b>	Tax Package 1040A-2	<b>6</b>	Tax Package 1040-6
<b>H</b>	Tax Package 1040A-1	<b>U</b>	IRS Walk-In Office	<b>7</b>	Tax Package 1040-7
<b>J</b>	Laminated Forms	<b>W</b>	Substitute Form Program (Printed by someone other than IRS)	<b>8</b>	Tax Package 1040-8
<b>I</b>	Publication 393	<b>X</b>	Package X	<b>9</b>	Tax Package 1040-9
<b>K</b>	BPOL other (state, government agency, military base, college, etc.)	<b>Z</b>	Tax Package 1040EZ-1	<b>10</b>	Tax Package 1040-10
<b>L</b>	Library	<b>1</b>	Tax Package 1040-1	<b>97</b>	Tax Fax Service
<b>M</b>	Publication 1132	<b>2</b>	Tax Package 1040-2	<b>98</b>	CD-ROM
<b>N</b>	Newspaper Supplement Program	<b>3</b>	Tax Package 1040-3	<b>99</b>	Internet
<b>O</b>	IRS Distribution Center	<b>4</b>	Tax Package 1040-4	<b>EL</b>	Electronically Filed
<b>P</b>	Post Office	<b>5</b>	Tax Package 1040-5	<b>PC</b>	Form 1040PC



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

www.irs.gov

Publication 3404 (1-00)  
Catalog Number 280061

## DID YOU KNOW...

Upon passage of the income tax law of 1913, a Personal Income Tax Division was established in the Bureau of Internal Revenue, as it was called back then. On January 5, 1914, the Treasury Department unveiled the filing form for the new income tax. Together with its instructions, it was four pages long. The form was numbered 1040 in the ordinary stream of numbering forms in sequential order by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. That was the beginning of the Form 1040 series that has grown to include 1040A, 1040EZ and many Schedules.